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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E,
LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/17/2018

TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [ENRG](#) [ER](#)

SUBJECT: COOKING FUEL SHORTAGES MET WITH RATIONING

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald K. McMullen for Reason 1.4 (d)

¶1. (C) Kerosene, used extensively for cooking in Eritrea, was distributed at market prices until April, but is now available only with a ration card. This is similar to other commodities, such as food staples, automotive diesel, and liquid propane. Families are limited to one gallon per month, which lasts about one week. Kerosene stocks, according to some reports, would last about 15 days at normal levels of use. Rationing will extend the current supply to six to eight weeks.

¶2. (C) A large shipment of liquid propane was trucked into Eritrea from Sudan in early July, and distribution began during the week of July 7. Propane, the primary cooking fuel in Eritrea, is available only by a ration card. Each family receives a single three and one-half gallon canister every three months.

¶3. (C) Fuel shortages led to an increase in the use of charcoal for cooking. When cooking fuel became unavailable in June, charcoal prices soared from \$.25/pound to \$1.25/pound. The Eritrean government subsequently closed all charcoal distributors for price gouging, and will reportedly allow them to reopen if they charge \$.33/pound. Because the government-imposed price is far below the market price, it is likely charcoal will be rationed in the future.

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